

Women empowerment: need to solve gender equations

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ABSTRACT: *As we all know that the women in India and the rest of the nations have been facing the domination in the male dominated society and over the last 10-15 years gender and development indeed been discussed a great deal. The patriarchal based societies where male is considered to be the heads of households, bread winners, and manager of property and active in politics, religion, business and the professions. Women on the other hand are expected and trained to bear and look after children. It is the fact that women in spite of being the worker of inside but no doubt they are doing the more work than male. Right from the sun shows its face in morning the women start to work at home till the late night. Therefore, it is pertinent to have a research eye on women and their work for society in general.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Empowerment of women is an issue which is widely discussed and talked about but, even when I begin with asking in my locality and, family members and with my friends, when is the international women's day celebrated; most of them get into trouble while guessing the date. Throughout history and in many societies including India, gender inequality was part and parcel of an accepted male dominated culture. Atrocities and discrimination are the two major problems, which the Indian women face in the present day society. The traditional mentalities of India assume that the place of women mainly concentrated to the household activities like kitchen work and upbringing of the children. Even after sixty five years of independence women are still one of the most powerless and marginalized sections of Indian society.

Women empowerment actually means to empower women in all aspects of their identity. It is about empowering women to let them take their own decisions. They must be free to be the way they want to be. Empowered women will have better position and better status in the society. Empowerment is a process aimed at changing the nature and reaction of systemic forces which marginalize women and other disadvantaged sections. While empowerment has become significant for creating enabling conditions for disadvantaged groups at the same time, it has also become a rallying cry for grassroots movements. For Sen (1993), empowerment is reflected in a person's capability set. The 'capability' of a person depends on a variety of factors, including personal characteristics and social arrangements. Empowerment is the capacity to fulfill this capability and not just the choice to do so. Sen's view on women's empowerment is indicated in his discussion on measurement of empowerment (Sen. 1990). According to him, the focus should be on certain universally valued functioning, which relate to the basic fundamentals of survival and well-being. These include proper nourishment, good health and shelter. If there are systematic gender differences in these very basic functioning achievements, they can be taken as evidence of inequalities in the underlying capabilities, rather than as differences in preferences. Women's empowerment emerges:

- a) As a result of cultural, economic and other changes, such as the availability of new
- b) technologies in their lives (e.g. mobile phones and satellite television);
- c) As women's current opportunities and constraints; and
- d) As a process in time, across generations (Cornwall and Edwards 2010).

Empowerment in public spaces is also determined by women's ability to form social networks and social capital and their ability to sanction, influence and change social norms. According to Krishna (2003), empowerment means increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make effective development and life choices and to transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes. The nature of empowerment here is of women not only at an individual level, but collectively as well

When a women is working for a whole day and night in her household and then why she remain unpaid despite she is an active member of her family or group. In a book Understanding Gender (Kamla Basin) quoted:

*If a Women can Cook,
so can a man ,
because a women doesn't cook with her
womb !*

What follows from this is that the different status women and men enjoy in society is indeed socially and culturally determined; it is man-made, nature has very little to do with it. It is gender not sex which has determined that, (almost) everywhere, women as a group are considered inferior to men. They enjoy fewer rights, control fewer resources, work longer hours than men but their work is either undervalued, or underpaid. They face the systematic violence at the hands of men and society; and they have little decision-making power in social, economic and political institutions.

Even for the empowerment of women in India, the Indian democratic process created the awareness among the women about their plight .The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental duties and Directive Principles. The constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the constitution of India provided for reservation of seats (at least one-third) in the local bodies of Panchayat's and Municipalities for women. Another constitutional Amendment (84th Constitutional Amendment Act 1998) reserving 33% seats in the Parliament and State Legislatives. Various welfare measures have been taken by the Govt. from time to time to empower women. The Training for- Employment Programme(1987), Mahila Samridhi Yagna(1993), the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (1992-1993) , Indira Mahila Yagna(1995), DWACRA Plan (1997) and Balika Samriddhi Yagna (1997). On 12 th July, 2001, the Mahila Samriddhi Yojana and Indira Mahila Yojna have been merged into the integrated self-help group programme i.e Swayam Siddha. In recent years the entrepreneurship has gained wide popularity on the whole globe. The rate of becoming entrepreneurs in women is more compared to men. Woman entrepreneur is any woman who organizes and manages any enterprise especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk. Women development is what the women should have the self-decision regarding the education, participation, mobility, economic independency, public speaking, awareness and exercise of rights, political participation and many more factors ensuring women empowerment. The government also implemented strategies for the development and empowerment of women in terms of social, economic, political and educational. In India many of the Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are also working for the betterment of the women development .They are working in rural areas pointed out the lack of participation by the poor and a women in developmental programmes.

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